

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3146
ANSWERED ON:14.12.2005
RETAINING PASSPORTS OF WORKERS
Satheedevi Smt. P.

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that the employers/sponsors retain the Passports of the employees after they are recruited for employment in the foreign countries;
- (b) if so, whether this causes serious inconvenience to the poor employees in Gulf countries; and
- (c) if so, the step taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to resolve this issue?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES)

(a) to (c): Yes, Madam. As per information received from the Indian Missions in Gulf countries, the sponsors normally retain the passports of the employees when they reach the destination country in order to obtain work permit/extension or renewal of visas and for security reasons as well as to discourage lateral movement of the emigrant workers to other employers. Such passports are returned to the employees by the sponsor in case of need, such as foreign travel or return to India. In case of any inconvenience reported, the concerned Mission immediately takes up the case with the sponsor directly and with the local authorities through local foreign office.